

TAO: TEACHING ARTISTS ORGANIZED

Creating and establishing partnerships is an essential part of the California Arts Council (CAC) Strategic Plan for 2008. One of our partnerships this year has been with the Alameda County Office of Education's Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership (ACOE), who created a three day training institute for teaching artists. Organized by artists who are part of a new effort to professionalize the field of teaching artists, Teaching Artists Organized (TAO) serves the San Francisco Bay Area, and is playing a key role in a growing statewide network of organizations that support and train teaching artists.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARTS EDUCATION

Arts Education is so important to the CAC that the Council voted to allocate at least 50% of its grants funding to arts education.

Community artists and arts organizations have been a part of arts education for as long as schools and the arts have been around. The CAC has always believed there was a role for artists in education and continues this commitment today, in spite of the severe cuts to our budget.



Whether for a performance, a workshop, a lecture demonstration or a residency, the non-profit arts community has stood steadfast with education and provided service in times of need. When Proposition 13 cut the arts out of education in California schools, artists and the non-profit arts community stepped up

to provide services to schools, believing that the arts are important for children.

Many changes have occurred over the years in California's arts education. The state has adopted content standards in the arts; the governor committed \$105 million in 2007-08 and \$109 million in 2008-09 for arts in education; and the CAC, although smaller in size, is motivated and energized through partnerships with the community to get things done.

THE ROLE OF TEACHING ARTISTS

Artists have always been a part of the landscape for the CAC, and Teaching Artists – a relatively new identification in California for artists working in schools – have always been an important part of the arts educational landscape at the Alameda County Office of Education. A perfect fit! In working with the CAC to present the Teaching Artist Institute, ACOE also turned to its partners: the Alameda County Arts Commission and the California College of the Arts, as well as an array of artists and arts service providers.

The fantastic result was a successful three day institute in Alameda, using seed funding from the CAC. We also funded a gathering of statewide organizations to look at this training and the possibility of TAO expanding beyond the Bay Area to other areas of the state.

Enjoy the latest [newsletter](#) from TAO. Read, ask questions, get involved! You can obtain more information from tao@teachingartistsorganize.org, or call Wayne D. Cook at the California Arts Council wcook@cac.ca.gov.